Head Quarters Near Suffolk.
April 22, 1863. 11 A.M.

General

Your letter of the 21st is received. In watching the movements of the enemy on the Chowan, (should he move there) you will not attack the gun-boats with your single rifle gun unless you can get an advantageous position, but confine your efforts more to prevent the passage of transports up the river, particularly if there are troops on board of them. Should the troops land for the purpose of driving off your guns, you must endeavor with your entire force to destroy them. By selecting a good position you can hold in check at least, a large force of the enemy so as to give us time to get our wagons across the Blackwater, and if the force is very strong, to move our army across also.

If your reconnoissances east of Dismal Swamp satisfy you that the enemy cannot advance upon you from that quarter, your observations can be particularly directed toward the Chowan and in the direction of Elizabeth City.

It is understood from your reports...
that the Bridges in the direction of Norfolk are destroyed, and the forces in that quarter merely on the defensive. If this be the case, you will not need a large force in that direction. Cavalry there, under the pretext of reconnoitring, as though it was our desire to advance by one of those routes, will keep the enemy in a defensive attitude whilst we hurry our operations for supplies.

If there is no force of the enemy South of you, nor any threatening you from the east, you might keep your main force near Gatesville and cover the operations of the trains with your Cavalry. You will thus be able to give the greater protection to your trains should the Enemy's Cavalry get out of Suffolk and attempt their capture. Extreme vigilance and activity on your part, and that of your entire Command are essential to give success to your movements. It is hoped that you will give all of your time and energies to this end.

Endeavor to create the impression upon the mind of the enemy that it is your purpose to advance towards Norfolk, and do not leave
any route to your rear, open to the enemy.

The foregoing is written by direction of
the Lieutenant General Commanding.

I am General your major,

primrose St.

Gillen

To

Wright, M. L. Binning

Commander in C.